

Message Text

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72

ACTION L-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ADP-00 IO-12 COA-02 EB-11 JUSE-00 INT-08

COME-00 DOTE-00 NSF-04 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-09 H-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01

SS-15 USIA-12 AGR-20 ACDA-19 AEC-11 CG-00 FMC-04

RSR-01 /170 W

----- 044652

R 111542 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8727

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 1639

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PBOR

SUBJ: LAW OF THE SEA-- PASSAGE THROUGH INTERNATIONAL STRAITS

1. DURING HIS CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER BENHIMA
APRIL 9 ASSISTANT SECRETARY NEWSOM RAISED MATTER OF
MOROCCO' S POLICY TOWARD PASSAGE THROUGH INTERNATIONAL
STRAITS. HE SAID MEDITERRANEAN WAS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT
SEA FOR US AND QUESTION OF FREE PASSAGE THROUGH STRAITS
OF GIBRALTAR WAS SOMETHING WHICH CONCERNED US VERY MUCH.
WE BELIEVED FREE ACCESS THROUGH STRAITS SHOULD BE IM-
PORTANT FOR MOROCCO TOO BECAUSE IF THIS DID NOT EXIST,
MOROCCO COULD CONCEIVABLY BE DENIED PASSAGE BY SEA
FROM ONE PART OF THE COUNTRY TO ANOTHER. WE HAD NOTED
THAT IN RECENT DAHIR CREATING EXCLUSIVE MOROCCAN FISH-
ING ZONE, WORDS " INNOCENT PASSAGE" WERE USED IN REFERING
TO STRAITS OF GIBRALTAR. FOR US, INNOCENT
PASSAGE WAS EXTREMELY UNDESIRABLE DOCTRINE SINCE IT SUB-
JECT TO RESTRICTIVE INTERPRETATION DEPENDING UPON POLITI-
CAL SENTIMENTS OF GOVERNMENT OF STRAITS COUNTRIES. WHILE
MOROCCO WAS FRIENDLY COUNTRY AND MIGHT INTERPRET THIS TO
OUR ADVANTAGE, WE WERE MORE CONCERNED BY PRECEDENT
FOR THIS AND OTHER STRAITS. WE WOULD RATHER HAVE ALL
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STATES BENEFIT THAN TO ESTABLISH RESTRICTIVE ARRANGEMENTS,
EVEN IF THEY WERE IN OUR FAVOR.

2. NEWSOM CONTIN AT
GATT.

3. AT SAME TIME, EMBASSY RECOGNIZES U. S. NEEDS TO
AVOID ANY ACTIONS THAT COULD FEED SUSPICIONS THAT WE
MIGHT BE ENCOURAGING NIGERIAN CAMPAIGN. THEREFORE,
WE URGE THAT U. S. MAINTAIN LOW PROFILE IN OUR TACTICAL
APPROACH TO THIS ISSUE, BUT OUR VOTE, IF IT COME TO
THAT, SHOULD REFLECT OUR CONTINUING OPPOSITION TO
REVERSE PREFERENCES.
REINHARDT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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30 JUN 2005

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